



Trustee News

CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

Volume: XII
Number: 8
May 2018

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Eastern Ontario Skilled Trades Competition

The goal of the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) has been to promote skilled trades as a viable and attractive alternative to traditional post-secondary programs. Numbers of students participating in the OYAP program have risen consistently, and more students are choosing this pathway to receive the benefits associated with early registration as apprentices. One of the highlights of the OYAP program has been the skills competitions which allow skilled trades students the opportunity to participate in a varsity style competition. This year, St. Lawrence College welcomed over 250 students from 30 secondary schools to compete in a wide range of events showcasing skills learned in classrooms or on cooperative education placements.

This year's event, which was held on February 21, featured 15 competitions at four locations in Cornwall. The hub of activity took place at St. Lawrence College, and included categories such as auto service technician, team carpentry, house building, cabinet making, welding, TV video production, small engines, photography, and drama. Other events included hairstyling and esthetics, which took place at Elegance College, with culinary events at St. Matthew CSS and the environment competition at the St. Lawrence River Institute.

"CDSBEO students did very well in many areas, winning medals in 7 divisions of the competition," noted CDSBEO OYAP Coordinator, Dan Lortie. "Two teams from Holy Trinity CSS won gold and bronze in the Environment competition at the St. Lawrence River Institute, and students from St. Michael CHS won silver in Team Carpentry, with Corrik Donnelly from St. John CHS taking silver in Cabinet Making. The teams in the Master Chef competition at St. Matthew Secondary from St. Matthew, St. John and St. Francis Xavier also took gold, silver and bronze, respectively."

"We've seen some amazing successes for our students over the years. We have many graduates that have gone on to become extremely successful in their chosen fields," noted Mr. Lortie. "These are students that have gone from school to work, or school to apprenticeship, and it's nice to look back and see so many success stories."

Mr. Lortie highlighted several successful graduate profiles, including several students who now teach skilled trades in secondary schools in the area.

Vice-Chair Ron Eamer commended Mr. Lortie for his dedication to the OYAP program, and his passion for student success, "The programs you oversee are always successful because of your enthusiasm, and the encouragement that you provide. I think these students have truly taken their lead from you, and put their full effort into what they set out to accomplish."

Legislative Assembly of Ontario Youth Model Parliament

The Legislative Assembly of Ontario Model Parliament is an educational program designed for high school students in grades 10 to 12 who are interested in current events and provincial issues. During a three day interactive experience, students have the opportunity to meet key figures in Ontario's parliament as well as learn about the history of the provincial legislature and the legislative process through workshops and presentations. Students must submit an application to be considered for the program which includes a 500-word essay and a letter of recommendation from a teacher, principal, vice-principal or guidance counsellor. St. Mary CHS grade 12 student Richard Deeves had an opportunity to participate in the enriching learning program, and he presented his experience to the Board at the April 17th meeting.

"The program took place over three days at Queens Park in Toronto," began Deeves. "I was lucky enough to be selected to be the representative for my home riding Leeds Grenville. The application process was quite lengthy, and included an essay. I was really interested in the experience and my parents pushed to follow through with the application process."

In total, 103 students from across the province participated in the experience, which took place at the end of February.

"I was the first St. Mary student to attend. My dream profession is to be a lawyer, and I knew the experience would help me to learn about the formation of laws and political policy, which seemed like important and applicable knowledge for my future."

During the three days at Queens Park, students participated in many engaging activities, including the "Meet the MPP Game". In this activity, attendees liaised in a speed rotation discussion format with MPP's and non-partisan political employees. Students learned about the political motives of MPP's, and had an opportunity to connect on a personal level with all of the participants.

"The most enriching experience included the mock parliament session held in the legislative chamber on day three," noted Deeves. "I learned the most on this day because of the hands on experience. Each party brought a bill to debate in the morning, which was followed by question period in the afternoon."

Deeves noted that the experience was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"I would like to congratulate you on your experience," noted Trustee Robin Reil. "It is certainly a terrific accomplishment for someone coming from the rural parts of Ontario to have this opportunity, and we wish you success as you move on to your studies next year."